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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MARR](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: NO CLEAR SUSPECTS IN RECENT BOGOTA BOMBINGS

Classified By: Political Counselor John Creamer
Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During the week of June 9-13, Bogota was hit by four explosions in different neighborhoods, causing property damage, injuries and one death. Initial reports indicated that the four explosions may have been the work of the FARC, but officials told us at least three of the bombings were likely the work of common criminals involved in extortion. Police arrested two individuals associated with the attack on a police station in Suba, but it remains unclear whether the FARC or criminal groups conducted the attacks. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Two bombings occurred during the evening of June 10, targeting a central Bogota fabric store and a police station in the north-western Suba section of the capital. The third and fourth bombings occurred on June 12 in north Bogota. The initial bombing of the fabric store left an innocent bystander dead. During the attack on the Suba police station, 13 police officers were injured, and three vehicles and eight motorcycles were destroyed.

¶3. (C) Initial media reports indicated the bombings may have been associated with FARC Eastern Block commander Jorge Briceno's ("Mono Jojoy") plans to move into the cities, but GOC officials are skeptical that FARC militia were responsible for the bombings. Colonel Fernando Buitrago, Head of the Colombian National Police (CNP) International Relations Division, told us that the bombings did not follow the FARC's modus operandi. He said the FARC is trying to rebuild its militia presence in Bogota, but the bombings do not appear to be part of this effort.

¶4. (C) General Rodolfo Palomino, Head of the Bogota Metropolitan Police, told us he personally visited each of the bombing sites. With the possible exception of the attack on the Suba police station, he concluded that common criminals were likely responsible for the incidents. In the case of the fabric store, Palomino said the owner had received extortion calls for weeks prior to the bombing. Similarly, the June 12 explosions barely caused any damage and were likely the work of delinquents or common criminals.

¶5. (C) In contrast, Palomino said the scope and sophistication of the police station bombing suggested it could be the work of FARC militia. The CNP knows the FARC maintain militias in Bogota, and that the group is trying to strengthen its presence in the capital. Still, Palomino told us that CNP officials think a new criminal gang operating in

Suba may also be responsible. The CNP have detained two suspects, but have not determined if they are connected to the FARC or other criminal groups. Palomino said the CNP would continue their investigations.

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